

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
  
Plaintiff,  
  
v.  
  
CURTIS ROBERT GRIFFIN,  
  
Defendant.

CASE NO. CR21-0174-JCC  
  
ORDER

This matter comes before the Court on Defendant Curtis R. Griffin and the Government's joint motion asking the Court to find that conducting Mr. Griffin's plea hearing by videoconference was necessary (Dkt. No. 214). Having thoroughly considered the motion and the relevant record, the Court hereby GRANTS the motion for the reasons explained below.

The Honorable S. Kate Vaughan, United States Magistrate Judge, accepted Mr. Griffin's guilty plea at a hearing held on January 4, 2022, that was conducted by remote means. (*See* Dkt. No. 208.) Mr. Griffin consented in writing to appear by videoconference. (*See* Dkt. No. 203.)

Under General Order 04-20, felony pleas and sentencings may proceed by video or telephone conferencing if "the district judge in a particular case finds for specific reasons that the plea or sentencing in that case cannot be further delayed without serious harm to the interests of justice." *See also* W.D. Wash. General Orders 14-21 (Dec. 22, 2021) (extending duration of General Order 04-20).

1 Mr. Griffin has a strong interest in the speedy resolution of his plea process, and further  
2 delays would prolong the stress and anxiety he faces as the current public health situation creates  
3 uncertainty for in-person court proceedings. (*See* Dkt. Nos. 203, 214 at 3.)

4 For the foregoing reasons, the Court GRANTS the parties' joint motion for a finding  
5 supporting the remote plea hearing (Dkt. No. 214). The Court FINDS that, for the reasons  
6 described above, the plea hearing could not have been further delayed without serious harm to  
7 the interests of justice.

8 DATED this 14th day of January 2022.

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12 John C. Coughenour  
13 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE  
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